

Week of February 3, 2003: MaineDOT Flash Facts

Topic: Young Driver Safety

Facts/Openers:

- Almost 17,000 16 and 17 year olds have Maine driver's licenses.
- One out of four 16 and 17 year old drivers will be involved in a crash this year, four times greater than the average for all drivers
- The most common cause for teenage crashes is Driver Inattention/Distraction. (Occurs 30% more often than it does for adults.)
- Young drivers (aged 16-24) are involved in nearly 40% of all Maine Crashes.
- 18 to 19 year olds are 5 times more likely to be involved in a fatigue related crash than drivers 25 and older.
- Crashes where the 18-24 year old driver was under the influence of alcohol or drugs is about 3 times that of drivers 25 years and older.
- Young drivers are involved 35% more frequently in Run Off the Road crashes than adults. (Often caused by a mix of excessive speed, driver inattention and inexperience)
- Unsafe or illegal speed is much more frequently a factor in young driver crashes than for older drivers. 16-17 year olds involved in crashes are 8 times more likely to be traveling at excessive speed than involved drivers over 25 years old.
- Forty percent of teenage crash fatalities are the result of unsafe speed.
- Young drivers are 4 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than drivers over 30.
- In 2000, two thirds of the 16-18 year olds killed or severely injured were not wearing seat belts (according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).
- For 16 to 20 year old drivers, inexperience leads to crashes 10 times more often than it does for older drivers. (17% for 16-20 year olds, 1.7% for those 21 and older.)

(See web links on this topic)

Monday:

Tips:

Parents...Do you want to be good friends with your children? You can show that you care (about their health and safety) by talking to your teens and being a positive role model:

- When you're driving-Be a Road Model. (No matter what the child's age...they learn more from you than you think!)
- After they get their license, occasionally go out with them-and let them drive! (Any friendly pointers you need to share?)
- If there is snow or ice on the roads, have them take the school bus. It may momentarily hurt their pride, but it also may keep them alive!
- Have them come home at a reasonable time at night. (avoiding those deadly late night hours on the road)

Reminders For Young Drivers:

- Driving demands your full attention.
- Keep scanning the road ahead and to the side for changes in road, traffic and other conditions.
- Be prepared to take evasive actions with split second timing.
- Adjust driving speed to conditions, but never above the posted speed limit.
- Changing the CD, using a cell phone or checking out what is going on at the side of the road may only take 2 seconds, but at 50 miles per hour, you will have traveled 150 feet. A lot can change in that short amount of time and that long of a distance.

Prepared by:

Safety Management

Systems Management Division

Bureau of Planning

Maine Department of Transportation

- The biggest distraction in the car may be your friends. Remember, you are responsible for the safety of everyone in the car. Save the fun and horseplay for after you get where you're going.

Wednesday:

Tips:

- Drive within your capabilities-know your limitations
- Keep safety in mind (Do not take chances)
- Keep your vehicle under control:
 - Maintain a safe speed
 - Slow down prior to curves and turns
 - Watch what other vehicles are doing (and be prepared to react to unexpected actions.)
- Here are some key traffic safety situations:
 - Following another vehicle: Maintain at least a 3 second gap between you and the vehicle ahead -longer in poor weather or when visibility ahead is blocked.
 - Making a left turn:
 - Keep your wheels straight until you go into the turn
 - Make sure oncoming traffic in all lanes is clear
 - Watch for pedestrians and bicyclists
 - Crossing an intersection: Look left, then right, then left again before proceeding
 - Snow banks: Can block your view of traffic. Use extreme care when pulling out-making sure you can see and be seen.

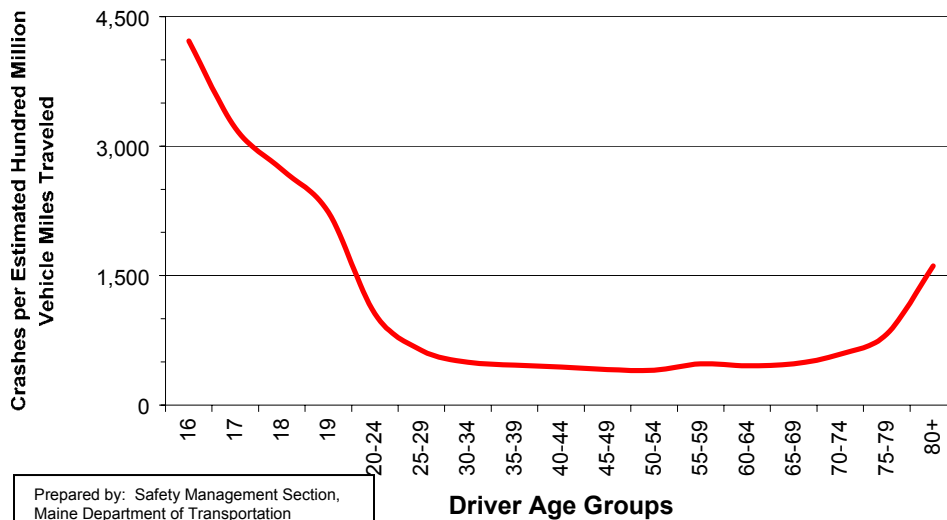
Friday

Tips:

- Snow and ice covered roads can be very treacherous. If there is snow or ice on the pavement:
 - Slow down. Be especially careful when approaching curves, intersections, or any stopped or slowing traffic ahead.
 - Allow adequate stopping distance to prevent skidding. You may be able to react faster than an older driver, but your vehicle takes the same amount of distance to stop and it takes a much longer distance to stop in snowy or icy conditions. Allow an extra cushion.
 - Make sure you have plenty of windshield washer fluid, with an extra supply kept in your vehicle.
 - Maybe taking the school bus today isn't cool, but being able to drive tomorrow is.
 - Ride only with friends that drive responsibly.
- Always wear your seatbelt
- Make sure everyone else in your car buckles up, too. (It's the law!)
- As a new driver, you may feel experienced after being licensed a month or two ... but Police Crash Reports show a high rate of inexperience for young drivers. Make crash avoidance a top priority when you're behind the wheel.

Crash Summary					
Age Group	Average VMT	Total Lic for 99-2001	Total Est HMVM	Number of Crashes	Crashes/HMVM
16	6652	16345	1.087269	4,586	4217.906
17	6652	33138	2.20434	7,077	3210.485
18	6652	39800	2.647496	7,226	2729.371
19	6652	42553	2.830626	6,325	2234.488
20-24	10397	206506	21.47043	22,770	1060.528
25-29	13598	205143	27.89535	17,670	633.439
30-34	15452	234527	36.23911	18,041	497.8323
35-39	14509	276527	40.1213	18,628	464.292
40-44	13677	295679	40.44002	17,880	442.1363
45-49	13640	280786	38.29921	15,702	409.9823
50-54	12434	255212	31.73306	12,839	404.5938
55-59	10126	190923	19.33286	9,210	476.3909
60-64	9671	145729	14.09345	6,428	456.0983
65-69	8437	129435	10.92043	5,213	477.3621
70-74	6783	113793	7.718579	4,548	589.2276
75-79	5021	88949	4.466129	3,674	822.6363
80+	2581	82823	2.137662	3,447	1612.51

Annual Crashes (1999-2001) per Driver Age Group's
***Estimated Hundred Million Vehicle Miles Traveled**



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